

OCTOBER 2, 1976

KISSINGER ON KOREA TALKS

ANNCR: THE UNITED STATES HAS AGAIN CALLED FOR A CONFERENCE TO WORK TOWARD REDUCING TENSIONS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOSEPH SULLIVAN HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS.

VOICE: SPEAKING TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY THURSDAY (9/30), SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER CALLED THE PLAN A "PHASED APPROACH" TO A SOLUTION TO THE KOREAN QUESTION. PRELIMINARY TALKS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA WOULD START IMMEDIATELY. IN THIS PHASE, THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA WOULD PARTICIPATE AS OBSERVERS. IF THE PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS YIELDED CONCRETE RESULTS, THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA WOULD JOIN THE TALKS FORMALLY.

THE AMERICAN PROPOSAL REPRESENTS A REFORMULATION OF A PROPOSAL FOR A FOUR-POWER CONFERENCE ON KOREA INTRODUCED BY SECRETARY KISSINGER AT THE LAST SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. U. S. OFFICIALS HAVE IN TURN EMPHASIZED THAT MORE IMPORTANT IS THE RESUMPTION OF BI-LATERAL TALKS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA, WHICH BROKE DOWN IN 1974. THE NEW FORMULA WOULD, IN EFFECT, SET THE STAGE FIRST FOR A RESUMPTION OF DIRECT TALKS BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH.

SECRETARY KISSINGER ALSO REITERATED THAT THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO HAVE THE UNITED NATIONS COMMAND DISSOLVED, SO LONG AS THE KOREAN ARMISTICE AGREEMENT IS EITHER PRESERVED OR REPLACED BY MORE DURABLE ARRANGEMENTS. THE ARMISTICE AGREEMENT, WHICH ENDED ONE OF THE BLOODIEST WARS IN MODERN HISTORY, IS A CAREFULLY DESIGNED STRUCTURE FOR MONITORING AND POLICING THE ARMISTICE ITSELF, AND REMAINS THE ONLY LEGAL BASIS FOR THE PRESENT ABSENCE OF HOSTILITIES ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA.

SOUTH KOREA'S ATTEMPTS TO OPEN A SERIOUS DIALOGUE WITH NORTH KOREA HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY REBUFFED BY THE NORTH. SO, TOO, HAVE ATTEMPTS TO PROVIDE FOR MORE HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS, SUCH AS VISITS BETWEEN FAMILIES DIVIDED BY THE KOREAN WAR.

THE SEOUL GOVERNMENT HAS CALLED FOR A NON-AGGRESSION TREATY BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH, FOLLOWED BY ELECTIONS TO FORM A SINGLE KOREAN GOVERNMENT. NORTH KOREA, INSTEAD, HAS CALLED FOR THE FORMATION OF A SUPREME NATIONAL COUNCIL, COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH KOREAN GOVERNMENTS, TO CONDUCT EXTERNAL ACTIVITIES AS A SINGLE STATE PENDING FINAL REUNIFICATION.

NORTH KOREA HAS ALSO PROPOSED A PEACE CONFERENCE WITH THE UNITED STATES, BUT WITH NO PARTICIPATION BY SOUTH KOREA. NORTH KOREAN PREMIER PAK SUNG CHUL TOLD THE NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN SRI LANKA IN AUGUST THAT ONLY HIS COUNTRY AND THE UNITED STATES CAN MAINTAIN PEACE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. BUT WASHINGTON HAS MADE CLEAR IT WILL RESIST ANY MOVE TO EXCLUDE SOUTH KOREA FROM DISCUSSIONS OF ITS OWN FUTURE.

THE KOREAN QUESTION HAS BEEN MADE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AS A RESULT OF TWO DECADES OF HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH. AND CERTAINLY THERE ARE ALTERNATIVES TO THE AMERICAN FORMULA FOR DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM. SECRETARY KISSINGER ACKNOWLEDGED THIS WHEN HE TOLD THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: "WE HOPE THAT NORTH KOREA AND OTHER CONCERNED PARTIES WILL RESPOND AFFIRMATIVELY TO THIS PROPOSED PROCEDURE, OR OFFER A CONSTRUCTIVE ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTION." INDEED, WASHINGTON IS NOT AS CONCERNED ABOUT PROCEDURE AS IT IS WITH THE OBVIOUS FACT THAT THE IMPASSE ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA CANNOT CONTINUE INDEFINITELY WITHOUT SERIOUS RISKS TO PEACE AND SECURITY IN ASIA.